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Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN ENSIGN, a Senator from the State of Nevada.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, You are our hiding place. You alone are our mighty rock and fortress. Thank You for providing us with shelter from life's storms and for making us Your children. Teach us to serve and honor You.

Strengthen our Senators and give them inward peace. Infuse them with the wisdom that strives for faithfulness. Let that faithfulness so energize them that harmony will overcome discord. May the effects of this unity be felt in our Nation, inspiring people to seek for common ground.

Bless and protect America. Make it a land that provides freedom's lamp to our world. Sustain our military and provide for its needs, according to Your glorious riches and power. We pray this in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JOHN ENSIGN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, September 23, 2004.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JOHN ENSIGN, a Senator from the State of Nevada, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. ENSIGN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this morning, the Senate will conduct a period of morning business for up to 30 minutes, with the first 15 minutes under the control of the majority and the following 15 minutes under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee. Following morning business, we hope to begin consideration of the Foreign Operations appropriations bill under a limited agreement on amendments. It is very important we address that bill. We have made good progress this week on the appropriations bills. As we set out last week, for this week the focus needed to be to address as many of the appropriations bills as possible. It is my hope that following morning business we can go directly to the Foreign Operations appropriations bill, deal with those amendments today, and vote on that bill today.

We are also waiting to receive the family friendly tax cut conference report from the House of Representatives later today. We will complete action on that measure before we adjourn for the Yom Kippur holiday, which begins tomorrow evening.

I know both of these issues are issues people have been addressing and have thought about, and I am confident we can do those over the course of the day and/or tomorrow morning. I do want, because I know people have travel

plans for tomorrow afternoon, to be able to complete that either this afternoon or tonight or tomorrow. Again, I think we can do them both today. I just want all of our Senators to work together and talk to the managers of both bills, if people have concerns, over the course of the morning.

SPEECH OF PRIME MINISTER ALLAWI OF IRAQ

We have just completed a wonderful and, I should add, inspiring joint meeting of Congress with Prime Minister Allawi, just 15 or 20 minutes ago. Indeed, he laid out both the great progress that has been made but his absolute commitment to free and fair elections in January in Iraq, making the statement that he understands that, because of the intent of terrorists to disrupt those elections, it is going to be very tough.

He looked at it very realistically. He said the elections will be fair and free, recognizing that in other great countries today, when they had their first elections, as they moved toward democracy, it was challenging. He recognizes those challenges. But again and again, to standing rounds of applause, he expressed his commitment to those elections in January.

Mr. President, I will close by saying Members can expect a busy afternoon with votes throughout the day. If we are to finish those bills, and we cannot do them over the course of the afternoon, we might well stay into this evening. So I encourage people to keep their schedules flexible. If we finish our business today, of course, we would not have to vote tomorrow morning. But these are two important pieces of legislation that we need to address.

Next week—and the reason there is this time sensitivity—we will have an issue which really rises above all others; that is, the safety and security of the American people. We have been addressing appropriate intelligence reform, addressing it in committee very satisfactorily in a very productive way

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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